

Abstract of the Disclosure

5 A network-based system for enabling users of the system to obtain
current agent-status information related to agents of an information-source
facility connected to the network before initiating contact with the agent or
agents of the information-source facility is provided. The system comprises
a first server node connected to the information-source facility and to the
10 network, a second server node connected to the first server node and to the
network, the first server node accessible to the second server node, a
network-capable appliance connected to the network, the second server
node accessible to the network-capable appliance; and a software application
distributed on at least the first and second server nodes, the software
15 application enabling distribution of the agent-status information. The user
operating the network-capable appliance accesses the second server node
and requests the agent-status information, the agent-status information
accessed from the first server node by the second server node and delivered
to the requesting user.

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